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# CREATION: A CAREER



## A CAREER PLANNING GUIDE IN RECREATION FOR STUDENTS & COUNSELLORS



Ontario  
Ministry of  
Tourism and  
Recreation

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Ontario



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Ministry of  
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It is with great pleasure that I present  
this fourth edition of Recreation: A Career.

With the growing development of recreation  
at all levels: public, private and volunteer, the  
need for recreation professionals becomes even more  
evident to ensure the orderly development of  
recreation services and the best use of resources.

I sincerely hope this booklet will be  
useful to all who consider recreation as a  
career and that it will provide the necessary  
stimulation for the future of recreation leaders.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Reuben C. Baetz".

Reuben C. Baetz  
Minister



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We are indebted to the following members of the Ontario Recreation Society's Council on Recreation Education and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation Staff for their contribution in the preparation of this guide book.

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## INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS RECREATION?



A simple definition of recreation is "Recreation is all of those things a person or group chooses to do in order to make their leisure time more interesting, more enjoyable and more personally satisfying."

The amount of leisure time available to us is ever-increasing and continually affected by changing economic times, social conditions, automation, and improved technologies in our work place, our communities, our neighbourhoods and our homes. How can recreation enrich an individual's life during this increasing time being made available for leisure? The answer probably lies in an understanding of leisure so that while he/she is retired, unemployed, turning screws or pushing computer buttons, a healthier subconscious looks forward to rewarding and satisfying recreation, which takes place during leisure time.

The extent to which leisure is an influence in our changing society, depends on how people of all ages use this leisure through recreation, whether it be physical, social or intellectual. Therefore, to be of maximum value to the individual, recreation must be challenging, stimulating, rewarding and satisfying.

*What you do is up to you – so enjoy!*

**Ray Wittenberg**  
Recreation Branch Director  
Ministry of Tourism and Recreation



## WHAT IS A RECREATIONIST?



To work in recreation, an individual must have a basic belief in the potential of play and recreation to improve the quality of people's lives. He or she must also value individuals' rights to make decisions relating to their leisure time. The recreationist must understand that the worth of a recreation activity cannot be evaluated solely on a win/lose or excellence basis. It must be understood that the intrinsic values – participating for the sake of participating, having fun, personal growth and self-satisfaction are just as important as awards won, if not more important.

The recreationist should possess strong people-skills, be willing to listen and empathize and be able to deal with individuals and groups in situations in a trusting manner. A successful recreationist is one who has earned the respect, trust and cooperation of the community. More and more, the recreationist's role is one of a facilitator who helps others to help themselves meet their recreational needs. Recognition of the importance of the volunteer in recreation is the key to the development of successful recreation activities and services.

Other areas of skill required may include community organization, leadership development, planning and administrative skills.

It is also crucial for the recreationist to possess a personal philosophy of recreation that is reflected in his or her own lifestyle. A recreationist must never forget how to play. He or she must continue to develop personal recreation skills and attitudes and must maintain a healthy balance between work and recreational values.

It is this philosophy that will help recreationists achieve the goal of improving the quality of life of the citizens in our communities.

## WHAT DOES A RECREATIONIST DO?



The professional recreationist may be involved in a variety of activities, from consulting to programming in any of the following areas:

### **Leadership**

Provide guidance to individuals and groups involved in recreation (i.e., senior citizen groups, volunteers, minor sports associations, service clubs, recreation centres).





### **Community Development**

Working with community groups and organizations providing volunteers with resources to help them plan their own activities, make decisions on their own and operate programs and services that meet their leisure needs (i.e., recreation committees, community schools, citizen groups, playground associations, sport groups, craft guilds).

### **Program Development**

Direct planning, operating and evaluating a wide variety of programs for the community when required (i.e., fitness classes, craft classes, older adult activities etc.).

### **Volunteer Development**

Arranging opportunities for individuals to volunteer in the development and operation of recreation programs and services; setting up training sessions, recruitment procedures and evaluation techniques.

### **Facility Development**

Developing, operating and maintaining a wide variety of facilities utilized for recreation (i.e., parks, pools, theatres, arenas, fitness centres, craft centres, outdoor education centres).

### **Planning and Administrative Skills**

Developing short and long range goals for the ongoing delivery of recreation services, operating and managing an office/department, administering activities and services (i.e., office procedures, annual budgets, personnel reports, evaluation, research).

### **Leisure Counselling**

Helping individuals, families and groups develop their own recreation life styles – be they children, teens, adults, senior citizens or individuals in institutions.

The recreationist provides these services in a wide variety of environments; municipal recreation, institutions for special populations (such as hospitals, correctional centres, schools for mentally and/or physically disabled individuals), health clubs, community schools, multi-programming agencies (such as YM-YWCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs, senior citizen centres), parks and outdoor education centres, cultural centres, private industry and many more.





## **POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS: WHO ARE THEY?**



Potential employers for recreationists can be found in virtually every organization that works in a social service capacity. Here are most of the traditional employers of recreation personnel:

### **Municipal Government**

Most Ontario Municipalities offer some recreation services to their residents. While the majority of these services are operated by volunteers, many municipalities hire recreation staff to assist in this operation. The size of the recreation department may vary from a one person operation to a staff of one hundred, depending upon the specific community and its population. Contact your local municipality to discuss potential employment opportunities.

### **Provincial Government**

Several ministries in the provincial government employ recreationists in a variety of capacities. These ministries are detailed as follows:

#### **Ministry of Tourism and Recreation**

The Recreation Division of this ministry employs staff to work in consulting capacities to the recreation field. The majority of these positions are community program consultants, whose primary function is to serve as a resource to specific municipalities & to regional sports, fitness and recreation groups, assisting in the areas of planning and development, leadership training, and funding sources. In addition to these staff, there are also a limited number of specialist consultants who deal in a specific area of recreation, sports, fitness and leadership.

#### **Ministry of Citizenship and Culture**

The Ministry of Citizenship and Culture offers opportunities for recreationists to provide consultative services to community organizations, local authorities and individuals involved in cultural and citizenship development.

#### **Ministry of Correctional Services**

Recreationists are hired by this ministry to work with the inmates of the various correctional institutions in Ontario. Staff activities vary from direct leadership of recreation programs to counselling the inmates on the constructive use of their leisure time upon re-entering community life.

#### **Ministry of Education**

Several colleges and universities in Ontario employ qualified recreationists to work with their students and in some



cases the surrounding community in the development of intramural programs, interest clubs and specific recreation programs.

### **Ministry of Community and Social Services**

This ministry hires recreation professionals to work in various facilities under their control such as senior citizens residences, juvenile detention centres and provincially-subsidized housing.

### **Ministry of Natural Resources**

Several of the provincial parks in Ontario employ recreationists to offer recreational programs and outdoor education services to the public.

### **Health Services**

Most hospitals, treatment centres, and psychiatric institutions employ recreationists to work with their patients. Staff functions include leading direct activities, integrating the patient into community recreation services, and counselling the patient in his or her leisure needs and interests.

### **Industry**

Several large corporations are hiring recreationists to work with their employees and families to provide recreation programs and services to meet their specific needs.

### **Boards of Education**

The current trend towards community education, community schools, and outdoor education has led to the employment of many recreation people to work with Boards of Education in these areas.

### **Private Recreation Opportunities**

Many private ventures are now operating in recreation and related areas, and are consequently hiring recreationists. Included in this area would be fitness centres, health clubs, golf and country clubs, curling clubs, residential camps, housing developments, private nursing homes, tourist resorts, and amusement parks.

As well, many recreationists have become employed as recreation consultants by planning and consulting firms, and initiated their own recreation contracting services.

### **Voluntary Agencies**

Several voluntary agencies are involved in recreation: YM-YWCA's, neighbourhood centres, boys clubs, girls clubs, YM-YWHA's. Some provincial recreation organizations and sports governing bodies may employ personnel to assist with their ongoing operation and development.



## **Canadian Armed Forces**

The Canadian Armed Forces has now established a special Physical Education and Recreation Branch for people who are interested in a career in physical education and recreation to serve with the Armed Forces. Interested individuals should contact their local recruiting office of the Canadian Armed Forces for further details.

## **Other**

Career opportunities in recreation may also exist in several other areas for the enterprising individual.

## **HOW TO BECOME A RECREATIONIST**



## **Recreation Education Programs in Ontario**

### **Recreation Education**

There are many courses and programs offered for individuals interested in pursuing a career in recreation.

The most familiar of these are the recreation leadership programs offered at a variety of colleges and universities. In addition, there are specific recreation courses available through other degree programs at some universities.

The following lists only those courses directly related to recreation. We suggest you contact your local college or university for other related courses or programs.

### **Recreation Leadership – College Programs**

The purpose of the Recreation Leadership Program is to prepare students to practice in the areas of leadership, organization, administration, supervision and evaluation in a variety of recreation programs and facilities serving all populations. The Recreation Leadership Program consists of two academic years. During this period, students are introduced to both theory and practice. Major areas of study include the history and philosophy of recreation and leisure services, the role of the recreationist and related areas in the





social sciences and humanities – strong emphasis is placed on practical application achieved through field placement. This program is offered at the following Community Colleges:

**Algonquin College**, Ottawa (Bilingual)

**Canadore College**, North Bay

**Centennial College**, Scarborough

**Confederation College**, Thunder Bay

**Conestoga College**, Kitchener

**Fanshawe College**, London

**Humber College**, Etobicoke

**Mohawk College**, Hamilton

**Sir Sandford Fleming**, Peterborough

### **Other Recreation Related College Programs**

<b>Program</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Arena Management	<b>Humber</b>	3 years
Athletic Training & Management	<b>Sheridan</b>	2 years
Coaching Techniques	<b>Seneca</b>	2 years
Fitness Instructor	<b>George Brown Fanshawe</b>	2 years
Forestry Technology – Parks and Recreation	<b>Sault Sir Sandford Fleming</b>	2 & 3 years
Golf Course	<b>Seneca</b>	2 years
Native Recreation	<b>Northern (special entrance requirements)</b>	1 year
Outdoor Recreation Technician	<b>Seneca</b>	2 years
Parks Operations & Services	<b>Lambton</b>	2 years
Recreation for Special Populations	<b>Georgian (Post Diploma)</b>	1 year
Recreation Merchandising	<b>Sir Sandford Fleming</b>	2 years
Recreation Facilities Administration (with Racquet Sport Option)	<b>Seneca</b>	3 years
Recreation Facilities Management	<b>Algonquin Seneca</b>	2 years
Ski Area Management	<b>Humber</b>	3 years
Sports Administration	<b>Durham</b>	3 years

Please consult individual colleges for details on specific programs.



## Recreation Related Degree Programs

A number of Ontario Universities offer degrees in recreation and leisure studies. Generally, these programs prepare students for positions in recreation services through emphasis on the principles of administration and man's use of leisure time. Programs may be generalized or focus on a particular area of study relating to recreation such as leisure studies, recreation administration, outdoor recreation, therapeutic recreation and resource management. Please check with individual Universities regarding their area(s) of speciality.

Program	University	Duration	Degree
Recreation/ Leisure Studies	<b>Brock University</b> St. Catharines	3 years	Bachelor of Recreation – Leisure Studies
Outdoor Recreation	<b>Lakehead University</b> Thunder Bay	4 years	Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation
Recreology (Bilingual)	<b>Ottawa University</b> Ottawa	4 years	Bachelors degree with honours in Social Science with a concentration in Recreology
Recreation	<b>University of Waterloo</b> Waterloo	4 years	Bachelor of Arts in Honours Recreation (co-operative system available)
		1 year	Master of Arts in Recreation

## Other Universities Offering Recreation Options

Course	Faculty	University
Community Recreation	Dept.of Physical Education in Athletics	<b>York University</b>
Recreation – Theory & Methods (graduate level)	Faculty of Environment of Studies	
Leisure Studies Courses are available (Contact the school for specific course listing)	School of Physical and Health Education	<b>University of Toronto</b>



## GRADUATION: WHERE DOES IT LEAD?



This is not the end. Having graduated from a recreation program you are now only really beginning.

Employment will not fall into your lap; searching for a job requires time and work by the searcher.

A couple of ideas:

1. You need to market your own skills and abilities in order to get a job.
2. There are no guarantees that you will get the job you always wanted.
3. It is necessary to gain experience in the profession. When the job situation is tight, it is important to be established in any related position.

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?



### **Step I:**

Prepare your own personal resume. Make sure your resume is flexible enough to adapt to different job searches.

### **Step II:**

Let as many people as possible know that you are looking for a job.

### **Step III:**

Start answering job advertisements that interest you and for which you are qualified.

### **Step IV:**

Begin your search for existing jobs that may not be advertised, and use your own initiative to discover the less visibly advertised jobs. Ask your friends and the recreationists you know.

### **Step V:**

Prepare yourself for interviews that may result from your searching. Begin to research the actual job for which you have been granted an interview and anticipate the questions that you may be asked or that you may like to ask.

### **Step VI:**

Do some follow-up after your interview to see where you can improve, if you do not get the job.





## **Step VII:**

### *Keep Trying!*

There are many factors which have a bearing on searching for and obtaining a job. There will be different personalities interviewing you, the candidate. The interviewer will make the decision based on what is important to him/her and the organization for which he/she works.

Both verbal communication and writing skills are usually quite important. An interview will reveal your verbal skills: a job application letter and your resume will display your writing skills.

Appearance is another factor. While dress should be appropriate and comfortable for the situation, the element of "body language" can leave lasting impressions with the interviewer. So dress properly and carry yourself appropriately.

Education is another important variable, but graduation alone does not guarantee the interviewee the best chance of obtaining the job.

Practical work experience will play a major role in your success at getting the job. Work experience whether it be part-time, volunteer, or field placement sometimes leads to full-time employment and is highly valued by future employers.

All of these factors will affect your chance of getting a job. There is no one combination of factors that will be successful on every try.

*You are responsible for your own future in the work force.*

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**



It is extremely important for the practitioner to keep up to date on current trends, issues and developments, both within the field and in areas which may have some impact on recreation, such as technological advances.

It is the recreationist's own responsibility to keep current. He/she should be aware of and encouraged to enrol in any of the part-time courses, workshops and training opportunities offered through colleges, universities and professional associations.

## **Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario**

In Ontario; there are many provincial parks and recreation associations. The Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario is a federation comprised of representatives from key recreation organizations in Ontario. This body acts in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation



on broad issues related to recreation legislation, development, and future activities.

The federation also offers services to its members such as Job Mart, a system of notifying members of positions available within the recreation field, and an annual general meeting.

### **Certification of Recreation Practitioners**

Over the past years, the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation has administered the Provincial Certification Program. This program provides certification to individuals employed in a municipal recreation director's position, or a position deemed equivalent. The Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario is currently devising a new certification system which will enable all recreation practitioners to apply for a certificate, recognized by their peers. This new system is intended to replace the current government program as soon as it can be implemented.

### **Provincial Organizations**

It is very advantageous for the recreationist to become involved with one of the provincial recreation associations. These associations cater to specific groups and often host professional development activities, workshops and conferences for their members. In addition, there is usually an annual meeting for members to get together, learn new concepts and plan for the future.

These organizations provide networks for the recreation practitioner to relate with others in the field. A partial listing of these organizations follows:

### **National and Ontario Recreation and Related Organizations**

<b>A.A.P.O.</b>	Association of Aquatic Personnel of Ontario
<b>A.O.S.A.</b>	Association of Ontario Sport Administrators
<b>A.M.O.</b>	Association of Municipalities of Ontario
<b>C.A.H.P.E.R.</b>	Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
<b>C.I.R.A.</b>	Canadian Intramural Recreation Association
<b>C.P.R.A.</b>	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
<b>O.A.A.</b>	Ontario Arenas Association
<b>O.I.R.A.</b>	Ontario Intramural Recreation Association
<b>O.M.R.A.</b>	Ontario Municipal Recreation Association
<b>O.P.A.</b>	Ontario Parks Association
<b>O.R.C.O.L.</b>	Ontario Research Council on Leisure



**O.R.S.**

Ontario Recreation Society

**S.D.M.R.O.**

Society of Directors of Municipal Recreation  
of Ontario

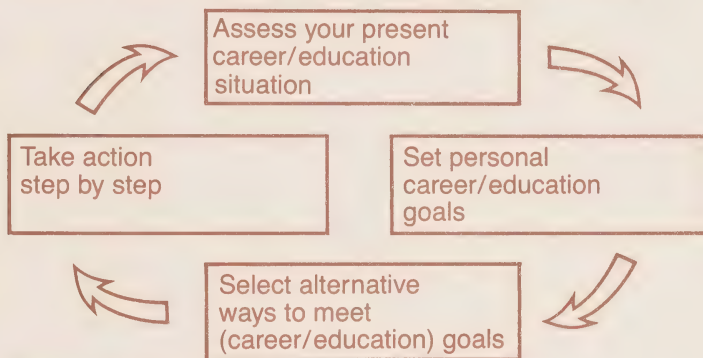
### Regional Organizations

Throughout Ontario, there are also many regional recreation organizations which cater to the immediate local needs of the recreationist. These regional groups often develop a network among practitioners giving one another support and assistance in their operations and activities.

Contact your local Ministry of Tourism and Recreation office for a regional organization which might meet your needs. (see appendix)

## WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?

### Career Planning: A Self-Directed Process



#### Assess your present situation:

The first step is probably the most important one in career planning. It has to be initiated by *you*. You must develop your own philosophy about leisure and recreation and in the process of doing so, address questions like:

1. What is the value of recreation in my lifestyle?
2. How interested am I in providing the type of service in which recreationists become involved?
3. Do I value the right for every individual to make decisions about *their* leisure time (even if it is not the same as mine)?

These questions need to be confronted and answered honestly. REMEMBER that as you proceed through your planning, the answers and the questions may change with your own growth.





In order to respond to these questions, you will need to talk with and observe others i.e. recreation professionals, teachers, other students. Search them out in your community; they will be glad to talk to you about the profession of recreation.

*Good Luck!*

## **APPENDIX A**

Addresses for Colleges and Universities with Recreation Related Courses and/or Programs.

### **Colleges**

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#### **Algonquin College**

1385 Woodroffe Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K2G 1V8 (613) 725-7432

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#### **Canadore College**

P.O. Box 5001, North Bay, Ont. P1B 8K9 (705) 474-7600

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#### **Centennial College**

P.O. Box 631, Station A

Scarborough, Ont. M1K 5E9 (416) 694-3241

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#### **Confederation College**

Box 398, Thunder Bay, Ont. P7C 4W1 (807) 475-6252

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#### **Conestoga College**

299 Doon Valley Dr.

Kitchener, Ont. N2G 3W5 (519) 653-2511

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#### **Durham College**

P.O. Box 385, Simcoe St. N.

Oshawa, Ont. L1H 7L7 (416) 576-0210

---

#### **Fanshawe College**

P.O. Box 4005, Terminal C.

London, Ont. N5W 5H1 (519) 451-7270

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#### **George Brown College**

Box 1015, Station B, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2T9 (416) 967-1212

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#### **Georgian College**

1 Georgian Dr., Barrie, Ont. L4M 3X9 (705) 728-1951

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#### **Humber College**

3199 Lakeshore Blvd. W.

Toronto, Ont. M8V 1K8 (416) 252-5571

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#### **Lambton College**

P.O. Box 969, 1457 London Rd.

Sarnia, Ont. W7T 7K4 (519) 542-7751

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#### **Mohawk College**

135 Fennel Ave. W., Hamilton, Ont. L9C 1G1 (416) 389-4461

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**Northern College**

P.O. Box 2002

South Porcupine, Ont. P0N 1A0 (705) 235-3211

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**Sault College**

P.O. Box 60, 443 Northern Ave.

Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. P6A 5L3 (705) 949-2050

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**Seneca College**

1750 Finch Ave. E., Willowdale, Ont. M2J 2X5 (416) 491-5050

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**Sheridan College**

Oakville Main Campus, Trafalgar Rd.

Oakville, Ont. L6H 2L1 (416) 845-9430

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**Sir Sandford Fleming College**

Brealey Dr., Peterborough, Ont. K9J 7B1 (705) 324-9144

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**Universities**

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**Brock University**

Recreation and Leisure Studies Dept.

St. Catharines, Ont. L2S 3A1 (416) 688-5550

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**Lakehead University**

Outdoor Recreation Dept.

Thunder Bay, Ont. P7B 5E1 (807) 345-2121

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**Ottawa University**, Dept. of Recreation

Tabaret Hall, 75 Laurier Ave. E., Ottawa, Ont. K1W 6N5

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**University of Toronto**

Leisure Studies Division, 320 Heron St., 2nd Floor

Benson Building, Toronto, Ont. M5S 2X6

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**University of Waterloo**

Recreation and Leisure Studies

Waterloo, Ont. N2L 3X2 (519) 885-1211

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**York University**

4700 Keele St., Downsview, Ont. M3J 2R3

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## **APPENDIX B** Ministry of Tourism and Recreation

### **Community Programs Offices**

#### **Northwest Region**

1825 East Arthur Street  
Thunder Bay, P7E 5N7  
Phone: 807-475-1255

479 Government Road  
Box 3000  
Dryden, P8N 3B3  
Phone: 807-223-2271

#### **Northeast Region**

147 McIntyre Street W.  
North Bay P1B 2Y5  
Phone: 705-474-3821

390 Bay Street, 3rd Floor  
Sault Ste. Marie, P6A 2A7  
Phone: 705-942-3751

199 Larch Street, 4th Floor  
Sudbury, P3E 5P9  
Phone: 705-675-4346

22 Wilcox Street, 2nd Floor  
Timmins, P4N 3K6  
Phone: 705-267-7117

#### **Eastern Region**

1 Nicholas Street, 11th Floor  
Ottawa, K1N 7B7  
Phone: 613-566-3721

280 Pinnacle Street, Suite 3  
Belleville, K8N 3B1  
Phone: 613-968-3474

1055 Princess Street, Suite 304  
Kingston, K7L 5T3  
Phone: 613-547-2235



**Central East Region**

700 Bay Street, 8th Floor  
Toronto, M7A 2R9  
Phone: 416-965-0283

114 Worsley Street  
Barrie, L4M 1M1  
Phone: 705-737-3301

305 Stewart Street  
Peterborough, K9J 3N2  
Phone: 705-748-3711

**Central West Region**

119 King Street West, 8th Floor  
Hamilton, L8N 3Z9  
Phone: 416-521-7229

71 King Street, Suite 301  
St. Catharines, L2R 3H7  
Phone: 416-688-6472

55 Erb Street East, Suite 307  
Waterloo, N2N 4K8  
Phone: 519-886-3520

**Southwest Region**

495 Richmond Street, 5th Floor  
London, N6A 5A9  
Phone: 519-438-2947

427 Tenth Street  
Hanover, N4N 1P8  
Phone: 519-364-1626

250 Windsor Avenue, 6th Floor  
Windsor, N6A 1N2  
Phone: 519-256-4919

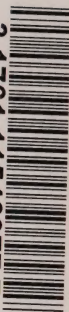
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